



## Appeal Statement

Single-Storey Front Extension  
AT  
Flat 1, 18 Platt's Lane,  
London NW3 7NS

Reference:  
18PL-2734

Date:  
2 May 2025

## **1. Introduction**

- a. This Appeal Statement has been prepared by Just Planning on behalf of Mr Toby Vanhegan to support an appeal against the decision of London Borough of Camden to refuse planning permission for a single-storey extension to the front of 18 Platt's Lane, in Hampstead.
- b. Following a description of the site and surrounding area, this report will consider the planning history, outline the proposal, provide an overview of relevant planning policy and set out the case for the appellant.
- c. The inspector's attention is also drawn to the Planning, Design & Access Statement and the Heritage Impact Statement that were submitted with the planning application and provide assessments of the proposal.
- d. It will be demonstrated that the proposal complies with relevant local and national policies and that planning permission should therefore be granted.

## 2. Background

- a. On 17 December 2024, the appellant submitted an application to London Borough of Camden for the following development proposal (reference: 2024/5582/P):

*Erection of a single storey ground floor front extension.*

- b. On 23 April 2025, the council refused planning permission for the following sole reason:

1. *The proposed development, by reason of its siting, scale and form, would result in an incoherent and incongruous form of development which causes harm to character and appearance of the host property, street scene and Redington Frognal conservation area, contrary to policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan (2017) and policies SD2 (Redington Frognal Conservation Area), SD4 (Redington Frognal Character), SD5 (Dwellings: Extensions and garden development) and SD6 (Retention of architectural details in existing buildings) of the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan 2021.*

### 3. Site Description

- a. 18 Platt's Lane is a three-storey, semi-detached house located on the eastern side of Platt's Lane, on its junction with Ferncroft Avenue. The house is converted into flats and this appeal relates to the ground floor unit, Flat 1.
- b. The building dates from the early 20th century (between 1894 and 1912) and exhibits architectural features typical of its era, including bay windows, dormers, and a front catslide roof. It is constructed of brick with a slate pitched roof and render on the upper floor elevations. The front elevation is shown in the image in figure 1, below.



*Figure 1: Image of the front of the appeal property.*

- c. The house has been altered over time, with various extensions added to the rear and side. The front garden has been converted to provide off-street parking, served via a crossover from Platt's Lane. A timber fence bisects the front garden, next to the main entrance door, providing Flat 1 with a private garden. The flat has a secondary entrance via this garden (in the location of the new proposed extension), as well as its main entrance off the communal corridor in the main part of the building.
- d. The semi-detached neighbour to the north is number 20 Platt's Lane. It has a similar design to number 18 and has a single-storey front extension in the same location as the extension proposed by the appellant for number 18.
- e. The two houses sit at an angle to the other buildings on Platt's Lane, which are orientated to follow a bend in the road, and perpendicular to houses to the rear,

fronting Ferncroft Avenue. The two houses and their immediate surroundings are shown in the satellite image in figure 2, below.



*Figure 2: Satellite image of the appeal property (red dot) and its immediate surroundings.*

- f. It can be seen from figure 2, above, that the area has a diverse character, with irregular building lines, a variety in architectural treatments and an eclectic mix of additions and projections (some original and some later) to individual buildings at ground, first and second floor levels.
- g. The building is not listed but the site is located within the designated Redington Frogna Conservation Area.

#### 4. Relevant Planning History & Appeal Proposal

- a. On 25 January 2024, the council approved an application for the following proposal (reference: 2023/5413/P):

*Erection of single storey rear extension, replacement of existing windows with double glazed casement windows, and changes to boundary treatment including landscaping.*

- b. Copies of the decision notice and approved plans for this earlier approval are provided in the appendices.
- c. The current proposal is for a single-storey extension to the front of the building, infilling an area to the side of the front entrance door.
- d. The extension would have a maximum height of 3.7m, depth of 2.6m, and width of 2.9m. It would feature a flat roof with a parapet in lead sheet finish.
- e. It would be constructed in exposed brickwork to match the existing building, including a decorative brick course aligned with the existing façade. It would include windows on both the front and side elevations that match the design and proportions of the existing windows on the property.
- f. The existing floorplans show the flat to have a shallow plan form with some constrained and awkward spaces. The purpose of the extension is to facilitate an enlarged reception room for the ground floor flat, providing improved living accommodation.
- g. The appellant refined the design of the proposal through discussions with the case officer over the course of the application. The footprint of the extension was reduced, and it was set 250mm away from the front and side elevations of the building to achieve a degree of subordination and architectural articulation.



## 5. Planning Policy

- a. Planning law states that decisions on planning applications must be taken in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant parts of the development plan for the area are the Camden Local Plan, adopted in 2017, and the Redington Frogna! Neighbourhood Plan, made in 2021.
- b. According to the reason for refusal, the council considers that the proposal fails to comply with policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and policies SD2, SD4, SD5 and SD6 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- c. Policy D1 (Design) of the Local Plan requires development to respect local context and character, preserve the historic environment and be of high-quality design.
- d. Policy D2 (Heritage) specifically addresses heritage conservation, requiring development within conservation areas to preserve or enhance their character and appearance. The council will not permit harm to designated heritage assets unless public benefits outweigh that harm.
- e. Policy SD2 of the Neighbourhood Plan (Redington Frogna! Conservation Area) aims to preserve or enhance the green garden suburb character of the conservation area. It requires retention of buildings or features that contribute to the area's special interest, including gaps between buildings, trees, hedges, and the open garden suburb character created by well-vegetated front, side, and rear gardens. The policy recognises that the character of the conservation area comes from both its buildings and its garden/landscape character.
- f. Policy SD4 (Redington Frogna! Character) seeks to ensure that development complements the distinctive character of the area and immediate site context and makes appropriate use of materials.
- g. Policy SD5 (Extensions and Garden Development) relates to extensions to existing buildings and states that they should use either matching materials to the original building or contrasting materials that maintain the original composition. Their massing, scale and setback should ensure they remain subordinate to the main building. Extensions into garden space should not significantly reduce natural soft surface area or negatively impact amenity, biodiversity and ecological value. The policy maintains minimum gaps between buildings to preserve views through built frontages, prevents enclosure of recessed porches, restricts balcony additions that would harm amenity or character, and requires retention of hedges and boundary walls.

- h. Policy SD6 (Retention of Architectural Details in Existing Buildings) focuses on preserving the architectural integrity of buildings in the Redington Frognaal area. It specifically requires that front boundary walls and original architectural details (such as chimneys, windows, and porches) that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area should be retained.
- i. The council has an adopted character appraisal and management plan for the Redington Frognaal Conservation Area, which was updated in 2022. It notes that the conservation area was designated in 1985 and that it comprises large and semi-detached houses with mature gardens laid out on sloping land to the west and south-west of the centre of the historic village of Hampstead.
- j. On Platt's Lane specifically, properties have a more domestic scale, comprising semi-detached and terraced properties predominantly of three storeys. These are typically set back behind small front gardens. The appraisal identifies the appeal property as forming part of a group of buildings (numbers 3-37 (odd), 43-67 (odd), 14-34 (even), 36-40 and 44-56 (even) Platt's Lane) that *"make a positive contribution to the conservation area"*.
- k. The typical architectural style features brick and tile construction, often with render on upper floors. Bay and dormer windows (many with small panes), gables and porches are common features throughout the area.
- l. Conservation guidance requires that extensions to existing buildings should be subservient in height, scale, and massing. They should complement and be unobtrusive to the existing landscape and townscape character of the area.
- m. The character appraisal resists side extensions or infills where an important gap or view would be compromised, or where the symmetry and composition of a building would be impaired.
- n. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development is sustainable when it meets the economic, social and environmental needs of a community.
- o. Chapter 11 encourages developers and local planning authorities to *"make effective use of land"*. Part (d) of paragraph 125 promotes *"the development of under-utilised land and buildings"*.
- p. Chapter 12 requires good design. Paragraph 131 describes the *"creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places"* as *"fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve"*.



- q. Paragraph 130 requires that densities be maximised, to *"ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site"*.
- r. According to paragraph 135, developments must *"function well add to the overall quality of the area"*, be *"visually attractive as a result of good architecture"*, be *"sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment"* and provide *"a high standard of amenity for existing and future users"*.
- s. Paragraph 202 states that:

*"heritage assets ... are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations"*

- t. Paragraph 210 requires that local planning authorities take account of the *"desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation"* as well as *"the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality"*.
- u. According to paragraph 212:

*"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

- v. According to paragraph 213:

*"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification."*

- w. According to paragraph 220:

*"Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance."*

- x. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires decisionmakers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of heritage assets, including conservation areas.

## 6. Case for the Appellant

- a. The council does not object in principle to the proposed extension to the ground floor flat to enhance the quality of accommodation it provides to the appellant and his family. It does not believe that it will harm neighbours' living conditions. It is concerned that it would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the property and the wider conservation area.
- b. The extension has been sensitively designed as a discreet addition to the house, modest in size and scale and tucked away in a recessed area to the side of the main entrance door. It is clearly subordinate to the larger, three-storey host building and preserves the architectural prominence of its distinctive catslide roof, which is unaltered.
- c. It is set back 250mm from the main front elevation and in 250mm from the side elevation of the house. It is just 2.9m wide and 2.6m deep. The flat roof, concealed behind a parapet, serves to minimise its height and give it a low profile.
- d. The architectural detailing reflects the design of the main house, with matching brickwork, a continuation of the existing decorative brick course, matching windows with arched soldier courses above and matching cast iron rainwater goods.
- e. The proposal complies with the specific guidance in the Redington Frogna Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan that extensions should usually be single-storey only and

*"should be subservient in height, scale, massing and set-back. Extensions should complement and be unobtrusive to the existing landscape and townscape character of the Area."*

- f. It also complies with the guidance that extensions should not spoil the uniformity of a terrace or group of buildings, and that side extensions should not compromise the symmetry of a pair of buildings.
- g. Though the house and its neighbour at number 20 have a similar design, it is one that differs from the other houses in the immediate area. There is a symmetry between numbers 18 and 20, but number 20 already has an infill side extension next to its cat-slide roof, as shown in the satellite image in figure 3, on the next page. The appeal proposal will not, therefore, interfere with the uniformity of a row of similar properties and will not create an asymmetry with

a matching neighbour (it will, in fact, return a degree of symmetry to this pair of houses).



*Figure 3: An existing extension to the side of number 20 means that the appeal proposal will not unbalance the pair.*

- h. The appellant notes that the original design of the appeal property is characterised by an asymmetric, eclectic mix of architectural elements. It is a wide, shallow building with a roof that steps down and projects out to the side, and also has a front cat-slide. There is a mix of brick and render, and a scattering of dormers on the front and rear roofslopes, all of different sizes, some with flat roofs and some with curved roofs, some centrally located and others offset. It is this mix of elements that gives the building its particular charm but also creates a tolerance for further additions that may complement, rather than detract from, its character and appearance.
- i. The appeal property does not have a statutory or local listing as an individual building and its heritage significance therefore derives from the contribution it makes to the group value of the buildings and spaces within the conservation area, including the area's gardens and streetscapes. The appraisal allows modern interventions to individual buildings and most of the buildings in the area have been altered and extended in ways that preserve their original design and architectural quality.
- j. The Heritage Impact Assessment submitted with the application concludes that the development will have a neutral or positive impact on the heritage asset. It observes that the area to be infilled is not aesthetically pleasing, with gas meters, poor quality brickwork and a metal grill over the entrance door. The garden

immediately outside this area has also been subdivided, with a timber fence bisecting the front curtilage.

- k. The council describes the proposal as prominent on the streetscene. As a front/side extension it will inevitably be visible in public views from the street, but its modest size and the extent to which it will be framed by the much larger (and symmetric) host building will mean that the extension itself will not appear out of place. In some views, such as from the junction with Ferncroft Avenue, the extension will be screened from view by mature boundary planting.
- l. The appellant has obtained a separate planning permission for a rear extension to the flat, some changes to the fenestration and alterations to the front curtilage of the building (reference: 2023/5413/P). The approved plans, copies of which are provided in the appendices, show that 2.2m-tall privet hedging will be planted along the timber fencing that leads to the main front door of the building, and will screen much of the appeal proposal from view.
- m. If the inspector is concerned about the degree of screening, a condition may be imposed on any grant of planning permission that further details of planting to the front of the proposed extension be submitted to the council for approval prior to the commencement of development.

## 7. Conclusions

- a. The appeal proposal is modest in size and scale and is discreetly located in a recessed area to the side of the main part of the building. It does not affect the key architectural features of the house – its distinctive cat-slide roof, two-storey bay window or array of dormers.
- b. The design has evolved through discussions with the case officer. It is a sensitive design incorporating setbacks from both the front and side elevations. It will appear as a subordinate addition with a low profile and will complement the architectural style of the building through matching materials and detailing.
- c. The proposal will enhance the symmetry between numbers 18 and 20 Platt's Lane, as the neighbouring property already has a similar extension.
- d. The modest scale of the extension, coupled with existing and proposed boundary screening, will ensure the development will not appear prominent in the streetscene. It complies with the council's conservation area guidance that extensions should be single-storey, subservient in scale and unobtrusive to the existing townscape character.
- e. The proposal would provide significant improvements to the living accommodation of the ground floor flat, enhancing its functionality and spatial quality without compromising the architectural integrity of the building or its contribution to the conservation area.
- f. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the relevant development plan and national policies and the inspector is respectfully requested to allow this appeal.



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